



2013

TORONTO URBAN DESIGN AWARDS

JURY REPORT

FOREWORD

The Toronto Urban Design Awards present an opportunity every other year to pause, take stock and recognize the work we are doing, collectively, to create a great city.

The city, after all, is expressed and emerges in the places and spaces that we experience and share in common, and the way we design these places has the potential to enhance our connectedness to each other, to both the past and the future, and to the environments that sustain us. When we get urban design right, the massing, placement, and detail of our buildings enhances the public realm and both enables and enlivens our experience of the city as pedestrians.

Urban design, then, cannot be diminished as a frivolous afterthought, to be employed once the real planning is done. Great urban places define and redefine us through their distinctiveness, accessibility, inspiration, building our capacity to attract and retain talent and capital over the long term. And this is why these Awards are worth the effort: the extent to which we are able to generate a shared language — and a shared understanding — of the city we are seeking to create, the more successful we will become in defining our 'built' identity.

As urban designers, our policy frameworks are the tools we employ to facilitate a dialogue about these shared expectations. But these Awards play an essential role as well. Through the recognition of a multitude of projects selected from 125 submissions received in 7 categories, this is our way to celebrate the work you do, to build a great city.

The jury members, Marianne McKenna, Cecelia Paine, Jeremy Sturgess, Eric Turcotte, and Matthew Blackett, came together for two days to deliberate each submission in extraordinary detail. They were impressed with the high calibre of design and after an extensive tour of the city, they selected 11 projects to receive Awards of Excellence and 16 to receive Awards of Merit. In addition, they chose to recognize one submission with a Special Jury Award.

Again this year, the Toronto Urban Design Awards have been funded entirely through the generous donations of our sponsors as part of a public-private partnership with the City of Toronto. A small team of committed City staff has expertly executed all aspects of the program including organizing the jury and submissions, hosting the jury event, publishing the Jury Report and staging the Gala Awards event.

Let's continue to build a great city, together.

Jennifer Keesmaat

Chief Planner & Executive Director
September 2013

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AWARD CATEGORIES

The City of Toronto accepted entries for the 2013 Urban Design Awards in seven major categories.

1. ELEMENTS

A stand-alone object, public art installation, landscape element or small-scale piece of a building which contributes significantly to the quality of the public realm. Submissions may include, but are not limited to: benches, doorways, signage, canopies, porches or colonnades, gateways, light fixtures, walkways, stairways, barrier-free access, fences and works of art.

2. BUILDINGS IN CONTEXT – PRIVATE

An individual building or a composition of buildings, that achieve(s) urban design excellence and is precedent setting for a project of its type through its relationship to the public realm, pedestrian amenity, detailing and massing, and the natural environment. Submissions should document and highlight how the project contributes to successful city-building through its contextual relationship, design quality and measures of sustainable design.

All types of buildings are eligible whether “landmark” or “background,” new construction or a restoration/transformation. Projects in both urban and suburban contexts will be considered.

The Building in Context category consists of three sub-categories that reflect a range of scales:

a. Low-scale A low-scale project is four storeys or less, notwithstanding its land use. Submissions may include, but are not limited to: multi-family residential uses such as low-rise apartments and townhouse developments; and retail, office, mixed-use or industrial facilities on main streets and arterials. This category previously included single-family dwellings (e.g. houses) which are no longer eligible for entry.

b. Mid-rise A mid-rise building is generally taller than four storeys, but no taller than the width of the adjacent street right-of-way (i.e. typically between 5 and 11 storeys). Submissions may include, but are not limited to: mixed-use “Avenue” buildings, small apartment/condo buildings, commercial and industrial buildings.

c. Tall A tall building is generally taller than the width of the adjacent street right-of-way. A building that has both tall and mid-rise components should be entered in this category. Submissions may include, but are not limited to: residential or commercial buildings.

3. BUILDINGS IN CONTEXT – PUBLIC

An individual building or a composition of buildings, with a primary function to serve the public and/ or is largely accessible to the public. Public Buildings are focal points for communities of various sizes, from small neighbourhoods to a national body. Submissions should demonstrate urban design and architectural excellence through a relationship to the public realm, pedestrian amenity, detailing and massing, the natural environment and sustainable design.

In this category, all building scales are eligible (low-scale, mid-rise and tall), as well as new construction and restoration/transformation. Buildings in both urban and suburban contexts will be considered.

Submissions may include, but are not limited to: education, health care, recreation, cultural, community and civic buildings.

4. SMALL OPEN SPACES

A small open space, generally related to and defined by adjacent buildings or natural/built elements, which provides an extension and addition to the public realm in an exemplary way. The small open space need not be publicly owned, but must be publicly accessible. Submissions may include, but are not limited to: courtyards, plazas, forecourts, gardens, trails, mews and small neighbourhood parks.

5. LARGE PLACES OR NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGNS

A design plan for a new or renovated large-scale area of the city. The project must be completed to such extent to allow the jury to clearly understand and evaluate the plan. The submissions in this category should clearly state the existing conditions and demonstrate how City objectives for establishing a clear public structure of streets, parks, open spaces and building sites are met.

The submission should also highlight major areas of innovation, particularly those related to infrastructure, environmental management and sustainable design, as well as provide evidence of community involvement and acceptance.

Submissions may include, but are not limited to: large parks, area/district plans, neighbourhood plans, Transit Oriented Developments (TODs), subdivisions, industrial parks, campus plans and streetscapes. Both urban and suburban contexts will be considered.

6. VISIONS AND MASTER PLANS

Unexecuted visions for the city, studies and master plans of high inspirational value with the potential for significant impact on Toronto's development. Submissions in this category may include but are not limited to: theoretical and visionary projects, as well as any project fitting the description of Large Places or Neighbourhood Designs that is unbuilt.

7. STUDENT PROJECTS

Students in urban design, architecture, landscape architecture and other design programs are invited to submit theoretical or studio projects relating to Toronto.

Note: The jury reserves the right not to present awards in every category. The jury also reserves the right to reallocate submissions into categories which they deem to be most appropriate.

JURY STATEMENT

The City of Toronto Urban Design Awards gives the entire city a moment to celebrate those who are helping to improve our community by shaping our physical environment. It also provides a snapshot of what we have accomplished, enables us to reflect on how we can best contribute to the process of city-building and inspires us to keep raising the bar.

As in previous years, the jury was impressed by the large number, range and quality of the entries. In the attribution of awards, it is important to note that the jury based its decisions on the urban design merits of a project, as opposed to purely architectural, aesthetic or stylistic considerations. While some projects may demonstrate excellence in architecture or interior design, the Toronto Urban Design Awards are for projects that not only demonstrate excellence in design, but thoughtfully engage with and contribute to the public realm and the creation of place.

The jury also considered how submissions responded to established City policies and guidelines, such as those created for mid-rise and tall buildings. These documents reflect the aspirations of the City and are essential guides that help to define our continuously evolving blueprint. The jury commends the City's continued efforts to work closely with the design community to initiate and evolve such guiding documents, as evidenced in the recently completed study identifying best practices for urban tree planting entered in the Visions and Master Plans category. Many of the awarded projects have clearly been influenced by City policies and guidelines, demonstrating the important contribution that these tools have made and will continue to make towards shaping our built environment.

The jury felt that some projects were submitted too soon after completion and in some instances, before they were completed. For these it was felt that more time was needed for the projects to settle into their surroundings before their contributions could be properly assessed.

The jury comments for each winning submission highlight what were felt to be the particular strengths and positive impacts of the project within its context or the city as a whole. These projects should be used as precedent for the future, not to be followed blindly, but learned from critically, as they represent some of the best work in the city today.

The jury was particularly impressed by the submissions in the Public Buildings category and had a challenging time narrowing its selection. To recognise the quality of submissions within the Public Buildings category, the jury decided to award five Awards of Excellence. These represented the most impressive submissions for cultural/religious institutions (Saint-James Cathedral Centre), civic institutions (11 Division – Toronto Police Service), transit infrastructure (Victoria Park Bus Terminal Replacement), new community facility (Regent Park Aquatic Centre), and renovation of an existing community facility (Mount Dennis Library). The jury commends the overall quality of the submitted Public Building projects for their positive impact on the image and quality of life in the city and their contribution towards the advancement of the City's urban design agenda.

Equally impressive were the number and quality of submissions in the categories of Elements, Small Open Spaces, Large Places and Neighbourhood Designs and Visions or Master Plans, most of which focused on design of the public realm. The recognized projects in these categories range in scale from very small to very large but each has a positive impact in their respective setting. They include the unique street level relationship with the merging of architecture and sculpture at the base of the Shangri-La / Momofuku Toronto, the intimate and transformative Dundas Street West Parkettes, the socially responsible and engaging Market 707 on Dundas Street, and the functional and practical Pottery Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Crossing.

Others in these categories were more significant in scale such as Sherbourne Common, which will help to set the stage for a whole new range of development and place-making. The reinvention of John Street as Toronto's Red Carpet illustrates the potential to transform an existing successful place into something extraordinary, whereas the remarkable and imaginative Evergreen Brick Works demonstrates the ability for adaptive reuse and the importance of sustaining a long-term vision.

Three educational buildings, George Brown College Waterfront Campus, Ryerson Image Centre and North Toronto Collegiate Institute, raised an interesting debate among the jury members. The jury was at a disadvantage of seeing these buildings during the summer semester when they are less animated rather than

alive with students during the typical academic year. The jury discussed at length what should be considered design excellence with regard to such building types and how they relate to and animate the adjacent public realm. It was clear that the location and treatment of entrances/openings/curtain walls, the use of transparency, and the balance between urban street light and interior artificial light, play a critical role to help dissolve the distinction between the inside and outside of a building and enhance pedestrian and user experience.

The jury did not recognize any projects in the Tall Building category. Surprisingly there were very few entries in this category and while some entrants may have contributed to the Toronto skyline, the jury felt that they did not contribute enough to the quality and character of the street to substantiate an award.

The Student Category received by far the most submissions. The jury noted that although there

were many intriguing propositions, the students would benefit from more guidance from their instructors to improve how their projects are presented from both a graphic and written perspective. Given the submission requirements, the students were generally trying to provide too much information as opposed to succinctly describing the essence of their project and as a result, the key ideas and concepts behind these submissions were often lost.

Collectively, this year's awarded projects will help to transform the way people who live, work and visit Toronto experience the city. They are what makes this city a more complete place, what gives Toronto a soul. The jury encourages its city builders, design professionals and citizens to continue to stimulate the city-building debate by following the examples of innovation and quality seen in this year's award-winning works.



Jury members (l-r)

Matthew Blackett, Jeremy Sturgess,
Cecelia Paine, Eric Turcotte, Marianne McKenna



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN CONTEXT

MOUNT DENNIS LIBRARY RENOVATION

1123 Weston Road

Project Team

G. Bruce Stratton Architects
Architect

Halsall Associates Ltd.
Structural Engineering

MCW Consultants Ltd.
Mechanical & Electrical Engineering

Steelcore Construction Ltd.
Contractor

Owner/Client

Toronto Public Library

Jury Comment

The Mount Dennis Library is a very thoughtful renovation of a modest yet important neighbourhood library. It represents a remarkable example of a project displaying a “complete” civic response by contributing creatively to the streetscape, providing a highly transparent façade, and paying attention to details. The building contributes and responds elegantly to the main street condition. It is a simple yet elegant transformation of a much-needed public building in this area, and helps set the stage for change in the future. The library’s renewed image redefines its place as an important community landmark for the area.



MARIANNE MCKENNA OAA, OAO, FRAIC, AIA, OC, Founding Partner, KPMB Architects

Marianne McKenna is a founding partner of Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects and is internationally recognized for making architecture that advances cultural and educational mandates and catalyses community building. Her projects include Le Quartier Concordia, an integrated vertical campus at Concordia University in Montréal, the Mike and Ophelia Lazaridis Quantum-Nano Centre at the University of Waterloo, Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis and the Music and Theater Arts building at MIT.

In Toronto, Marianne's projects include the Royal Conservatory's TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning which earned KPMB its 11th Governor General's Medal, the Rotman School of Management Expansion at the University of Toronto, and a series of acclaimed work spaces for Torys LLP, Woodbridge Company and CTV Inc. She is currently directing a renovation and expansion of Massey Hall.

Marianne has juried a range of art competitions and currently sits on the Board of Metrolinx. She is a past board member of the Institute of Contemporary Culture (ICC) for the Royal Ontario Museum. She was awarded an Honorary Fellowship from the Royal Conservatory, was named one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women by the Women's Executive Network (2010), and was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2012.



CECELIA PAINE FCSLA, OALA, FASLA Professor of Landscape Architecture and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, University of Guelph

Cecelia Paine is a professor of landscape architecture at the University of Guelph where she teaches community design, urban park and open space planning, and professional practice. Since 2006 she has held a cross-appointment as Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Prior to joining the University, she practised in Ottawa where her firm focused on urban design, heritage conservation, urban parks and open space planning and community design.

Cecelia is the recipient of numerous professional awards for design, planning, research and communication. Her work on the redesign of Sparks Street Mall in Ottawa is one of her most recognized projects. She has made significant contributions to conservation of Canadian heritage landscapes including the Queen's Park Legislative Assembly grounds, Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital, Rideau Hall in Ottawa, Mackenzie King Estate in Gatineau Park, Quebec and the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village in Alberta. Other major projects include master plans for three major sectors of the Ottawa Greenbelt.

She has served as an advisor to international, national, provincial, regional and local governments on heritage landscapes, including the conservation of Parque del Este in Caracas, Venezuela, designed by world renowned landscape architect, Roberto Burle Marx. Cecelia recently directed a survey and evaluation of over 100 golf courses designed by Stanley Thompson, Canada's foremost Golden Age golf course architect. Her current research interests include development of a Canadian landscape charter, integrating heritage values in contemporary design, and design in support of human health. Her work has been presented at conferences and published in professional and scholarly journals nationally and internationally.

Active in professional bodies, Cecelia has served as president of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects, was the founding editor of the professional magazine, Landscapes Paysages, and is currently president of the Landscape Architecture Canada Foundation. She is a Fellow of both the Canadian and American Society of Landscape Architects.



*photo credit:
Robert Lemermeyer*

JEREMY STURGESS MAAA, FRAIC, RCA, Principal, Sturgess Architecture

With over 35 years in architecture, Jeremy Sturgess has contributed to Canadian architecture at a variety of levels. He is well known for his ability to create buildings responsible to an urban design vision, and has been recognized locally, nationally and internationally for his work, which includes distinctive houses, housing at all scales, and civic and commercial buildings that consistently contribute to their environment.

Jeremy Sturgess is a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. He is a Fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, an adjunct professor at the University of Calgary, and serves on the Calgary Planning Commission and the University Of Calgary Faculty Of Environmental Design Dean's Circle. A book on his work, Full Spectrum, was published by the University of Calgary Press in 2010. In 2011, he won at the World Architecture Festival in Barcelona, and in 2012 received the Queen's Jubilee Medal.

ERIC TURCOTTE MCIP, RPP, OAA, OAO, LEED AP BD + C , Partner, Urban Strategies Inc.

Eric is an Urban Designer, a Planner and an Architect. He is a Partner at Urban Strategies Inc., where he has since worked since 1996. He has over 19 years of experience in Canada, the United States and Europe. His areas of expertise include downtown revitalization plans, redevelopment of inner city neighbourhoods and large scale institutional and corporate master plans. Many of the projects on which Eric has acted as the design lead have been honoured with awards for their overall quality.

Eric is currently managing the Mid-Centretown Community Design Plan in Ottawa, and is working on the University of Ottawa Long Term Development Strategy. Eric recently completed the Eglinton Crosstown Design Framework and the Functional and Conceptual Station Design for the underground stations for TTC and Metrolinx, and directed the Sheppard Avenue at Warden Avenue Study for the City of Toronto. He recently completed the Ottawa Escarpment Area District Plan, (2010 CSLA National Award of Excellence in Planning & Analysis, 2009 OPPI/Heart and Stroke Foundation Healthy Communities Award, 2009 OPPI Award of Excellence), which involved the integration of the proposed LRT through the heart of downtown Ottawa. He was also lead designer for the King Edward Precinct Master Plan for the University of Ottawa, (2007 OPPI Award of Excellence), and for the Downtown Ottawa Urban Design Strategy 20/20, (2005 CSLA National Award of Excellence, 2004 ASLA Award of Excellence for Planning and Analysis). Eric also just completed the Etobicoke Centre Public Space and Streetscape Plan (2012 CSLA Award of Merit).

Eric is an active member of the OPPI Urban Design Working Group (UDWG) and a founding member of the Council for Canadian Urbanism (CanU). He was until recently a member of the City of Toronto Design Review Panel.



MATTHEW BLACKETT Publisher & Creative Director of Spacing

Matthew Blackett is the publisher, creative director and one of the founders of Spacing magazine. As publisher, Blackett has helped shape the magazine into one of Canada's top small magazines: Blackett was named Editor of the Year for 2007 by the Canadian Society of Magazine Editors and Spacing was named Canadian Small Magazine of the Year from 2007 to 2009, and best Canadian Magazine Blog in 2011 and 2012, and Best Canadian Magazine Web Site in 2012.

Blackett is the co-recipient of the 2010 Jane Jacobs Prize for "contributing to the fabric of Toronto life in a unique way... that has become a part of our shared urban experience." He also was a member of the Toronto Transit Commission's blue ribbon Customer Service Advisory Panel in the spring and summer of 2010.

Matthew was also awarded a 2007 Canadian Urban Leadership Award for "City Soul" by the Canadian Urban Institute for his part in creating Spacing. Under Blackett's artistic direction, the magazine has also been awarded international design awards for its layout, photography and TTC-inspired subway station buttons.

From 2004 to 2006, Blackett was a member of the City of Toronto's Roundtable on a Clean and Beautiful City. Matthew was a citizen member of the City of Toronto's Pedestrian Committee from 2006 to 2010, and has been a member of the board of directors of The Friends of Fort York since 2007.



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